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This Looks Good

FARMERS BATTLE SPARROW PESTS

The farmers of Utah began poisoning the English sparrow four years ago in order to reduce the damage and financial loss which this pest brought about. Last year, with the help of the county agents of Utah, the farmers united in a state-wide campaign to poison the sparrow during the winter months. Mr. R. J. Evans, county agent leader of Utah, reports that as a result of this campaign, in which nearly all the counties participated, nearly 700,000 sparrows were killed. A conservative estimate charges each English sparrow with eating at least six quarts of wheat during the year. This would mean that as a result of this campaign there was a saving of \$131,990. There were 7,783 farmers cooperating in this work and they used 5,243 pounds of poisoned bait.

In general the following methods were used. Wheat was poisoned with strychnine in accordance with a recipe sent out by the Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture. This was put up in one-quarter pound paper bags in the county agent's office. Full instructions were printed on these bags for the use of the poison. Each cooperator receiving the bait was signed up and agreed to report on the results, giving the number of dead sparrows counted. Usually the sparrows were enticed for a few days by putting unpoisoned bait in places not frequented by other birds and also inaccessible to the poultry of the farm. Then a few grains of poisoned wheat were put out each day. The dead sparrows were gathered up, counted and either burned or buried every few days to prevent the sparrow population from becoming suspicious. The number of sparrows counted by each farmer was reported to the committeemen or the county agent at the end of the season's work.

As many as 240 dead sparrows were gathered up from the effects of a single package of poisoned wheat. It is safe to say that where care was used in placing out the poisoned bait an average of 75 sparrows were killed with each one-quarter pound package. In several counties, 50,000 to 100,000 sparrows were killed as a result of this campaign.

